

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0001
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 1566

LIMDIS

NOFORN

ADCOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, MV, SW

SUBJ: REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES - REMARKS OF SWEDISH AMBASSADOR

1. IN EXTENDED CONVERSATION ARRANGED AT HIS INITIATIVE,
SWEDISH AMBASSADOR ROSIO (RESIDENT IN ISLAMABAD) IN MALE FOR
INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS, MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS
WHICH I PASS ON FOR WHAT THEY ARE WORTH. (PLEASE PROTECT.)

2. HE EXPECTS MORE SWEDISH TOURISTS TO THE MALDIVES AND IS
EXPLORING WAYS OF PROVIDING BACKUP SERVICES IN CASE HIS
NATIONALS NEED HELP (READ GET INTO TROUBLE). THERE IS NO
DESIRE AT PRESENT TO ASSIGN A RESIDENT SWEDISH FOREIGN SERVICE
OFFICIAL IN MALE. (ONLY INDIA, PAKISTAN AND LIBYA NOW HAVE
REPRESENTATIONS.) ABLE SWEDISH SENIOR AID REPRE-
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SENTATIVE IN COLOMBO, NOW ACTING AS CHARGE ON BEHALF OF DELHI
EMBASSY, NOT LIKELY TO BE INTERESTED IN OR ABLE TO ACT OFFICI-
ALLY ON MALDIVES CONSULAR PROBLEMS.

3. SWEDEN IS EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF APPOINTING A CON-
SULAR AGENT IN MALE. I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT HIGH PRIORITY
WOULD BE GIVEN TO APPOINTING RESIDENT SWEDISH AMBASSADOR IN

COLOMBO, SINCE THE MOST POLITICAL THING ANY OF US DO IN SRI LANKA IS TO GIVE ECONOMIC AID. HE SEEMED TO AGREE.

4. IN DISCUSSING SWEDISH AID ACTIVITIES, HE OBSERVED (A) THEIR AID PROGRAMS REFLECT MORE DOMESTIC POLITICS THAN ANY SWEDISH FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS. AS I UNDERSTOOD HIM, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS REGULARLY ESPOUSE AID TO LEFTIST THIRD WORLD REGIMES AS A WAY OF UNDERCUTTING THE SMALL BUT NOISY AND WELL-ORGANIZED COMMUNIST BLOCK OF VOTERS (5 PERCENT) THAT CAN MAKE THE CRITICAL DIFFERENCE IN SWEDEN'S EVENLY BALANCED VOTING; AND (B) THE SWEDISH AID BUREAUCRACY HAS WITHIN IT MANY SOFT HEADS WHO THINK THAT ANYONE FROM MOZAMBIQUE, TANZANIA, ANGOLA, ETC., MUST BE INF HEROIC CHAPS. HE THOUGHT THEY HAD WASTED A GREAT DEAL OF AID ON VERY SILLY PROJECTS AND INEPT IRRESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENTS. HE EXPECTED SWEDEN MIGHT BE DOING SOMEWHAT MORE FOR SRI LANKA SINCE A NUMBER OF OFFICIALS SEE WITH SOME RELIEF A SERIOUS REGIME IN COLOMBO BUT ONE WHICH SOUNDS TO THE ENTHUSIASTS IN STOCKHOLM SUFFICIENTLY SOCIALIST TO STILL DESERVE SUPPORT.

5. I COMMENTED THAT THIS SRI LANKA GOVERNMENT HAD ADOPTED MORE RATIONAL POLICIES THAN ANY OF ITS PREDECESSORS KNOWN TO ME. BUT WHETHER THEY COULD TRANSLATE AMBITIOUS POLICIES INTO EFFECTIVE BUREAUCRATIC OR PRIVATE SECTOR PRACTICES STILL REMAINED TO BE SEEN.

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